

January 31, 2018

PIN 18-02-CCP

TO: ALL LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES

FROM: *Original signed by Pamela Dickfoss*  
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SUBJECT: **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND DISASTER PLANS**

**Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary**

PIN 18-02-CCP ... This PIN outlines the importance of licensees maintaining detailed up-to-date emergency disaster plans, conducting regular emergency drills, and ensuring timely communication regarding emergencies and disasters with their local Regional Office.

Unfortunately, in recent months California residents have been impacted by continuous natural disasters and there has also been an increase in human-caused disasters throughout the state. Emergencies and disasters cause tremendous stress which can be particularly difficult for children. Nonetheless, the overall impact of such can be reduced by developing clear, detailed and up-to-date emergency disaster response plans and conducting regular emergency drills.

Different types of disasters must be considered when developing emergency plans including fire, flood earthquakes and human-caused disasters. It is also important to be aware of and consider the particular risks and hazards in your local area. Your facility's disaster plans should take into consideration the possible need to evacuate, temporarily relocate, and shelter in place. Licensees should take time to ensure that these plans are always current and include alternative plans of action.

**DISASTER AND MASS CASUALTY PLANS:**

Licensing requires facilities to document disaster plans using the Emergency Disaster Plan for Child Care Centers ([LIC 610](#)) or the Emergency Disaster Plan for Family Child Care Homes ([LIC 610a](#)). Supporting documentation for detailed plans may be needed, though not a specific requirement. Posted plans should be made visible to adults (and children who are old enough) with all exits and fire escapes marked and clearly identified.

- For Child Care Centers, the plan must include, but is not limited to fire safety, including the means for exiting the facility, transportation arrangements, relocation sites that are equipped to provide safe temporary accommodations for children, plans for supervision of children during and evacuation or relocation, and the means of contact should the evacuation occur, as well as plans for contacting the appropriate authorities. The plan must also include the method and procedures for evacuating nonambulatory children.
- For Family Child Care Homes, the plan shall ensure the provider, the assistant provider, and other members of the household, and all children, age and ability permitting, be instructed in their duties under the disaster plan. Newly enrolled children, again, as age and ability permits, shall be informed promptly of their duties as required in the plan.

Because earthquakes are a natural disaster that can be a threat throughout California, all facilities should also have, and regularly review, a completed earthquake preparedness checklist ([LIC 9148](#)) available alongside the disaster and mass casualty plan. Posting this plan helps everyone, including families, to be prepared in the event of an earthquake.

### **Evacuation:**

The Department encourages licensees to have a variety of possible evacuation locations. As evidenced in recent months, sometimes a planned evacuation location is closed or inaccessible and therefore multiple, alternate plans are recommended. Evacuation locations that are not in the vicinity of the child care center should be considered in the case of natural disasters, which can affect entire cities and counties. Relocation sites can include a family member's home, a church, school, or a designated shelter. Having ongoing communication with individuals who maintain the relocation sites is key. It is also important to communicate with families regarding planned relocation sites ahead of time because it may be difficult to contact individuals during a disaster to confirm your whereabouts should you need to evacuate.

As part of the evacuation plan, it is also important to develop a means of safe transportation for the children in care. Licensees should consider plans for transporting large numbers of children, which may include the need for appropriate child safety seats for evacuation purposes. Utilization of assistance from staff,

neighbors, families, and local transportation agencies should be considered before an emergency occurs.

**Evacuation preparation:**

In an effort to be on alert and prepared for an emergency situation, it is recommended that licensees closely monitor local news broadcasts, including local radio stations, to be quickly notified when voluntary evacuations are announced. Planning ahead and being prepared during voluntary evacuations can help prevent traffic hazards and allow for a safer and smoother relocation.

**Sheltering in place:**

If ever a situation arises when it is safer for those in a child care facility to shelter in place, it is ideal to have enough food and water to accommodate the staff and children in care for at least 72 hours, if necessary. Regularly check that emergency food and supplies are up-to-date, including water, which can expire.

If children cannot be safely reunited with families right away, it is best to shelter-in place, when safe and possible, so that children can stay in a familiar environment with people they know. Licensed child care providers are responsible for the care and supervision of the children until someone with legal authority assumes responsibility. You may need materials to help keep children comfortable and distracted in case you are sheltered within a specific area of the facility for an extended time. It is also important to consider the need for temporary sleeping accommodations.

**DISASTER DRILLS**

Health and Safety Codes [1596.95\(f\)](#) & [1597.54\(b\)\(2\)](#) require licensees to conduct disaster drills at least once every six months. Best practices call for coordinating various types of drills on an ongoing, regular basis in an effort to be better prepared for any emergency situation. By preparing for natural and human-caused disasters, licensees can help staff, and children in their care, feel more at ease and prepared should a disaster occur. During and immediately following an emergency situation, face-to-name roll call is recommended to ensure all children are accounted for. When documenting disaster drills, please include the date and time of the drill and keep at the facility for at least one year.

Openly sharing information with families regarding the various drills conducted can help reassure and support young children. Families can assist in discussing the purpose of emergency drills with their children and helping to ease fears and anxiety their children may have regarding emergencies or the possibility of various threats to their safety

**COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR LICENSING OFFICE**

In an emergency situation first call 911 and notify appropriate emergency response teams. As soon as it is safe to do so, it is important to notify your Regional Office and request to speak to the Duty Officer or assigned Licensing Program Analyst (LPA), if available. To help ensure seamless communications, licensees should be sure they always provide their most current contact information to their [local licensing Regional Office](#).

The Child Care Licensing Program is here to work in collaboration with licensed facilities, particularly in the event of emergencies throughout the state. In such cases, the Department will reach out to licensed providers, often multiple times, to help assess the situation and plan for recovery efforts. The Department may contact the facility by phone and/or email, or conduct a welfare visit in the event the licensee or other facility staff cannot be reached. The purpose of this recurrent communication may be to determine the facility status (i.e. evacuation, closure, shelter in place, etc.), evaluate the health and safety of staff and children in care, and assess the availability of, and access to, child care in the community.

For more resources on planning for an emergency or evacuation, please visit the Community Care Licensing [Child Care Program website](#).

We also invite you to view our training videos for Parents and Providers on Disaster Planning and Fire Safety at the following links:

[Child Care Centers Disaster Planning and Fire Safety](#)

[Family Child Care Providers Disaster Planning and Fire Safety](#)

If you have any questions, please contact your local licensing Regional Office.